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Security Council

Sixty-third year

Provisional

5837th meeting

Friday, 15 February 2008, 10.25 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Arias	(Panama)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Belle
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Kafando
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Jurica
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Dabbashi
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis
	Viet Nam	Mr. Le Luong Minh

Agenda

The situation in Somalia

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08-24087 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Somalia

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Somalia, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Duale (Somalia) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mrs. Lila Ratsifandrihamanana, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations.

It is so decided.

I invite Mrs. Ratsifandrihamanana to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mrs. Lila Ratsifandrihamanana, Permanent Observer of the African Union, to whom I give the floor.

Mrs. Ratsifandrihamanana: I thank you, Sir, for organizing this meeting and for giving us the opportunity to brief the Council on the situation in Somalia, which is indeed of widely shared concern.

As members of the Security Council may be aware, the Assembly of the African Union, during its most recent summit in Addis Ababa, endorsed the proposals put forward by the Peace and Security Council in its communiqué of 18 January 2008. A meeting of the International Contact Group on Somalia was also organized at the margins of the summit, and other meetings were held between the African Union stakeholders and various groups and personalities.

I would first like to provide some information about the situation of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). As part of its mandate and in spite of the constraints facing the Mission, AMISOM has continued to conduct various activities, including providing medical services to people and providing water to the population residing within the immediate surroundings of the Mission's headquarters in Mogadishu. The Mission has also continued to receive weapons surrendered by various armed elements for storage and destruction.

The budget for AMISOM amounts to about $622 million per year. So far, a little more than $32 million has been contributed, mainly from the European Union, Italy, Sweden, China and the League of Arab States. The United Kingdom has pledged £8.5 million for the deployment of AMISOM and has provided assistance for the establishment of AMISOM's support management planning unit, and the EU has also pledged €5 million for that unit and another €500,000 to cover insurance costs, in addition to technical assistance for budget-related materials. In terms of extrabudgetary contributions to African Union peace efforts, Italy has just announced a grant of €40 million.

Furthermore, the United States continues to provide significant logistical support to the Ugandan contingent, as well as communications equipment for the Mission's strategic headquarters in Addis Ababa, and has pledged to facilitate transportation to Somalia for troop-contributing countries. Various pledges were also received from NATO, Algeria, Kenya and Nigeria.

Out of the 8,000 troops authorized by the Council in January 2007, only two Ugandan battalions and an advance team of 192 Burundian soldiers, which were deployed on 23 and 24 December 2007, are now on the ground in Mogadishu. Steps are under way to deploy the main body of the first of the two battalions pledged by Burundi. It is also instructive to note that at the African Union Summit, the Ugandan head of State decided to pledge more troops for the Mission.

I would next like to provide some information regarding the efforts of the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission. In October 2007, the Chairperson of the African Union appointed a new Special Representative for Somalia, Mr. Nicolas Bwakira. In December 2007, he visited Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda to establish initial contacts with the national authorities concerned. He has also established contacts with members of the international community, including the United Nations, the European Union, the African Union's bilateral partners and representatives of regional and international non-governmental organizations. He took the opportunity to stress the need for renewed and concerted efforts to overcome the current difficulties in Somalia and to reiterate the determination of the AU to do whatever it can to contribute to the early restoration of peace and stability in Somalia.

(*spoke in French*)

I wish next to inform Council members of proposals made by the AU Peace and Security Council in its communiqué of 18 January 2008 and endorsed by the Assembly of the African Union. The African Union is convinced that, notwithstanding the complexity of the problem, the situation in Somalia can still be improved with the assistance of all Somali parties and the entire international community.

Regarding the reconciliation process, the communiqué of the Peace and Security Council, which was endorsed by the Assembly of the African Union, stressed the need for the Transitional Federal Government to adopt specific measures to implement the conclusions of the National Reconciliation Congress. The communiqué also stressed that acts of violence must cease and that peaceful solutions must be sought in order to achieve true national reconciliation. The communiqué also stressed the need for the international community and countries of the region to fully support the ongoing reconciliation process and to coordinate their initiatives. The African Union Commission will soon convene a high-level international meeting in order to refocus international attention on Somalia and to mobilize necessary support for the ongoing process.

With regard to strengthening the capacities of the Transitional Federal Institutions, the African Union Assembly, through the Peace and Security Council communiqué, again stressed its appeal to all member States and to the entire international community to lend adequate support in order to strengthen the capacities of Somali institutions, including the Transitional Federal Government and its defence and security forces in order to enable them to fully shoulder their responsibilities. For its part, the African Union Commission will hold consultations with the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank and other competent African institutions in order to dispatch a needs assessment mission for Somalia.

Concerning tension in the Somali regions of Sool and Sanaag, the parties concerned were urged to take urgent steps to deal with the tension now prevailing there in order to reduce the resulting consequences. Furthermore, the need was noted to strengthen cohesion among the countries of the region and to create an environment conducive to meeting security challenges in Somalia. The Commission, in close cooperation with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and stakeholder countries, will also take appropriate steps to support efforts to increase regional cohesion.

Concerning the United Nations arms embargo and action against the "spoilers", an appeal was made to all member States and partners of the African Union to strongly support the legitimate Somali institutions in their efforts to combat violence. The Security Council is thus called upon to reconsider the arms embargo imposed by resolution 733 (1992) in order to enable the Transitional Federal Government to establish and equip its security and defence forces, while maintaining and strengthening the provisions of the embargo against anyone seeking to jeopardize the peace and reconciliation process in Somalia.

The Security Council is also urged to take proper actions against those who are hampering the political peace process or who might threaten by force the Transitional Federal Institutions or AMISOM.

With regard to the humanitarian situation, an appeal is made to the entire international community to continue to provide humanitarian assistance to the population, and to make financial contributions to address needs that are not covered by the 2008 consolidated appeals process for Somalia. It is also requested that all necessary steps be taken to create conditions conducive to the delivery of humanitarian aid, including unhindered access to populations in need, and to provide security for humanitarian workers

and humanitarian organizations. Member States that have the resources are also encouraged to contribute towards escorting and protecting ships transporting humanitarian aid for the World Food Programme to Somalia, pursuant to resolution 1772 (2007), adopted by the Security Council on 20 August 2007.

It was also decided to extend the mandate of AMISOM for six months from the date of the decision in order to carry out the same tasks and responsibilities as those defined in its current mandate. It was also decided to appeal once again to African Union member States to provide the troops and personnel required to enable AMISOM to reach the authorized strength, as well as the financial and logistical support necessary to facilitate the Mission's deployment and the continuation of operations. Lastly, an appeal was also made to the African Union's partners to provide AMISOM with increased logistical and financial support, given that, by deploying an operation in Somalia, the AU had also acted on behalf of the international community as a whole.

Finally, with regard to the deployment of a United Nations operation, the Assembly of the African Union, on the basis of the communiqué that had been proposed by the AU Peace and Security Council, stressed the need for the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation in Somalia, which would replace AMISOM and would support long-term stabilization and post-conflict reconstruction in the country. A solemn appeal is made to the Security Council to take urgent measures for the swift deployment of such an operation, in keeping with its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. In the meantime, the Council is requested to ensure that all the necessary action is taken so that the United Nations can provide AMISOM with a package of assistance measures, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter.

In the light of the foregoing, we are aware of the breadth and scale of the challenges, which require African responsibility as well as international solidarity. We are confident that the Council will be able to take appropriate decisions that are in keeping with the aspirations of all Somalis to peace.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mrs. Ratsifandrihamanana for her statement.

I now call on the representative of Somalia.

Mr. Duale (Somalia): We thank you, Mr. President, for giving us this opportunity to participate in today's meeting of the Security Council. I also wish to endorse, with thanks, the statement just made by the Permanent Observer of the African Union, with which we fully agree. In addition, on behalf of my Government, I am obliged to refer to and endorse two similar communications dated 12 February 2008 and addressed to the President of the Security Council and to the Secretary-General, respectively, by the Chairman of the African Group for the month of February 2008, His Excellency Ambassador Chungong Ayafor, conveying the concern of the African Group about the critical situation in Somalia and the inadequate attention by the international community so far.

The Council may also recall the recent appeal made by African heads of State, as referred to by the Permanent Observer. At its tenth Ordinary Session, held recently in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union appealed once again to the Security Council to urgently take steps for the early deployment of United Nations peacekeeping operations to further enhance peace in Somalia, bearing in mind that the Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Members will also recall that the Security Council, in its presidential statement of 19 December 2007 (S/PRST/2007/49), reiterated its request that the Secretary-General develop the existing contingency plans for the possible deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation to further enhance peace in Somalia and to support the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), as set out in resolution 1772 (2007).

In order to avoid a deterioration of the security situation in Somalia, we urge the Security Council in no uncertain terms to accelerate the implementation of the aforementioned decisions referred to in the presidential statement I have cited. For its part, my Government stands ready to fully cooperate and work closely with the Security Council and the Secretary-General in that regard.

We very much hope that the decision or action taken by the Security Council will not be confined to a mere rollover of the authorization for AMISOM and the adoption of a wait-and-see policy. We — and, indeed, the African Union and the international

community — expect more from the Council on this issue.

I should like to conclude by noting that the security situation in Somalia is a real challenge to the African region and a threat to international peace and security. We hope that we will all rise to the occasion and meet the challenges of the situation in Somalia robustly and securely.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.